

The court has reviewed the M&R, the record, and plaintiff's objections. As for those portions of the M&R to which plaintiff made no objection, the court is satisfied that there is no clear error on the face of the record.

The court has reviewed de novo the portions of the M&R to which plaintiff objected. The scope of judicial review of a final decision concerning disability benefits under the Social Security Act, 42 U.S.C. § 301 et seq., is limited to determining whether substantial evidence supports the Commissioner's factual findings and whether the Commissioner applied the correct legal standards. See, e.g., 42 U.S.C. § 405(g); Shinaberry v. Saul, 952 F.3d 113, 120 (4th Cir. 2020); Walls v. Barnhart, 296 F.3d 287, 290 (4th Cir. 2002); Hays v. Sullivan, 907 F.2d 1453, 1456 (4th Cir. 1990). Substantial evidence is evidence a "reasonable mind might accept as adequate to support a conclusion." Richardson v. Perales, 402 U.S. 389, 401 (1971) (quotation omitted); see Biestek v. Berryhill, 139 S. Ct. 1148, 1154 (2019). It "consists of more than a mere scintilla of evidence but may be less than a preponderance." Smith v. Chater, 99 F.3d 635, 638 (4th Cir. 1996); see Biestek, 139 S. Ct. at 1154; Shinaberry, 952 F.3d at 120. This court may not re-weigh the evidence or substitute its judgment for that of the Commissioner. See, e.g., Shinaberry, 952 F.3d at 120; Hays, 907 F.2d at 1456. Rather, in determining whether substantial evidence supports the Commissioner's decision, the court examines whether the Commissioner analyzed the relevant evidence and sufficiently explained her findings and rationale concerning the evidence. See, e.g., Shinaberry, 952 F.3d at 120; Sterling Smokeless Coal Co. v. Akers, 131 F.3d 438, 439–40 (4th Cir. 1997).

Plaintiff's objections restate the arguments made to Judge Jones concerning whether the Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ") properly weighed the medical opinion testimony and plaintiff's testimony and built an accurate and logical bridge from the evidence to conclusion. Compare [D.E. 19] 2, 9–13 with [D.E. 24] 1–2. However, both Judge Jones and the ALJ applied the proper legal

standards. See M&R [D.E. 23] 2–13. Moreover, substantial evidence supports the ALJ’s analysis. See id.

In sum, the court OVERRULES plaintiff’s objections to the M&R [D.E. 24], ADOPTS the conclusions in the M&R [D.E. 23], DENIES plaintiff’s motion for judgment on the pleadings [D.E. 18], GRANTS defendant’s motion for judgment on the pleadings [D.E. 20], AFFIRMS defendant’s final decision, and DISMISSES this action. The clerk shall close the case.

SO ORDERED. This 4 day of May 2020.


JAMES C. DEVER III
United States District Judge